

CLAIMS

1. An isolated polypeptide comprising at least an immunogenic portion of a prostate-specific protein, or a variant thereof, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(a) sequences recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-45, 47-52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-471, 472-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536;

(b) sequences that hybridize to any of the foregoing sequences under moderately stringent conditions; and

(c) complements of any of the sequence of (a) or (b).

2. An isolated polypeptide according to claim 1, wherein the polypeptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence recited in any one of SEQ ID No: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-45, 47-52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-471, 472-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536, or a complement of any of the foregoing polynucleotide sequences.

3. An isolated polypeptide comprising a sequence recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 108, 112, 113, 114, 172, 176, 178, 327, 329, 331, 339, 383, 477-483, 496, 504, 505, 519, 520, 522, 525, 527, 532, 534 and 537-550.

4. An isolated polynucleotide encoding at least 15 contiguous amino acid residues of a prostate-specific protein, or a variant thereof that differs in one or more

substitutions, deletions, additions and/or insertions such that the ability of the variant to react with antigen-specific antisera is not substantially diminished, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide comprising a sequence recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-45, 47-52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-471, 472-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536, or a complement of any of the foregoing sequences.

5. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a prostate-specific protein, or a variant thereof, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide comprising a sequence recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-45, 47-52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-471, 472-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536, or a complement of any of the foregoing sequences.

6. An isolated polynucleotide comprising a sequence recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-45, 47-52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-471, 472-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536.

7. An isolated polynucleotide comprising a sequence that hybridizes under moderately stringent conditions to a sequence recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-

45, 47-52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-471, 472-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536.

8. An isolated polynucleotide complementary to a polynucleotide according to any one of claims 4-7.

9. An expression vector comprising a polynucleotide according to any one of claims 4-8.

10. A host cell transformed or transfected with an expression vector according to claim 9.

11. An isolated antibody, or antigen-binding fragment thereof, that specifically binds to a prostate-specific protein, the protein comprising an amino acid sequence encoded by a polynucleotide sequence recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-45, 47-52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-471, 472-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536 or a complement of any of the foregoing polynucleotide sequences.

12. A monoclonal antibody that specifically binds to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 496, 504, 505, 509-517, 519, 520, 522 and 539-551.

13. A monoclonal antibody comprising a complementarity determining region selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 502, 503 and 506-508.

14. A fusion protein comprising at least one polypeptide according to claim 1.

15. A fusion protein according to claim 14, wherein the fusion protein comprises an expression enhancer that increases expression of the fusion protein in a host cell transfected with a polynucleotide encoding the fusion protein.

16. A fusion protein according to claim 14, wherein the fusion protein comprises a T helper epitope that is not present within the polypeptide of claim 1.

17. A fusion protein according to claim 14, wherein the fusion protein comprises an affinity tag.

18. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a fusion protein according to claim 14.

19.. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a physiologically acceptable carrier and at least one component selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a polypeptide according to claim 1;
- (b) a polynucleotide according to claim 4;
- (c) an antibody according to any one of claims 11-13;
- (d) a fusion protein according to claim 14; and

(e) a polynucleotide according to claim 18.

20. A vaccine comprising an immunostimulant and at least one component selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a polypeptide according to claim 1;
- (b) a polynucleotide according to claim 4;
- (c) an antibody according to any one of claims 11-13;
- (d) a fusion protein according to claim 14; and
- (e) a polynucleotide according to claim 18.

21. A vaccine according to claim 20, wherein the immunostimulant is an adjuvant.

22. A vaccine according to claim 20, wherein the immunostimulant induces a predominantly Type I response.

23. A method for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a pharmaceutical composition according to claim 19.

24. A method for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a vaccine according to claim 20.

25. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an antigen-presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide according to claim 1, in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or excipient.

26. A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 25, wherein the antigen presenting cell is a dendritic cell or a macrophage.

27. A vaccine comprising an antigen-presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide according to claim 1, in combination with an immunostimulant.

28. A vaccine according to claim 27, wherein the immunostimulant is an adjuvant.

29. A vaccine according to claim 27, wherein the immunostimulant induces a predominantly Type I response.

30. A vaccine according to claim 27, wherein the antigen-presenting cell is a dendritic cell.

31. A method for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of an antigen-presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536, and thereby inhibiting the development of a cancer in the patient.

32. A method according to claim 31, wherein the antigen-presenting cell is a dendritic cell.

33. A method according to any one of claims 23, 24 and 31, wherein the cancer is prostate cancer.

34. A method for removing tumor cells from a biological sample, comprising contacting a biological sample with T cells that specifically react with a prostate-specific protein, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(i) polynucleotides recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536; and

(ii) complements of the foregoing polynucleotides;

wherein the step of contacting is performed under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the removal of cells expressing the prostate-specific protein from the sample.

35. A method according to claim 34, wherein the biological sample is blood or a fraction thereof.

36. A method for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient a biological sample treated according to the method of claim 50.

37. A method for stimulating and/or expanding T cells specific for a prostate-specific protein, comprising contacting T cells with at least one component selected from the group consisting of:

(i) a polypeptide according to claim 1;

(ii) a polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide comprising a sequence provided in any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536;

(iii) a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of (i) or (ii); and

(iv) an antigen presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide of (i) or (ii),

under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the stimulation and/or expansion of T cells.

38. An isolated T cell population, comprising T cells prepared according to the method of claim 37.

39. A method for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a T cell population according to claim 38.

40. A method for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of:

- (a) incubating CD4⁺ and/or CD8⁺ T cells isolated from a patient with at least one component selected from the group consisting of:
 - (i) a polypeptide according to claim 1;
 - (ii) a polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide comprising a sequence of any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536;
 - (iii) a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of (i) or (ii); or
 - (iv) an antigen-presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide of (i) or (ii);such that T cells proliferate; and
- (b) administering to the patient an effective amount of the proliferated T cells, and thereby inhibiting the development of a cancer in the patient.

41. A method for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of:

- (a) incubating CD4⁺ and/or CD8⁺ T cells isolated from a patient with at least one component selected from the group consisting of:
 - (i) a polypeptide according to claim 1;
 - (ii) a polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide comprising a sequence of any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536;
 - (iii) a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of (i) or (ii); or
 - (iv) an antigen-presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide of (i) or (ii);such that T cells proliferate;

- (b) cloning at least one proliferated cell to provide cloned T cells; and
- (c) administering to the patient an effective amount of the cloned T cells, and thereby inhibiting the development of a cancer in the patient.

42. A method for determining the presence or absence of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of:

- (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with a binding agent that binds to a prostate-specific protein, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:
 - (i) polynucleotides recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536; and
 - (ii) complements of the foregoing polynucleotides;
- (b) detecting in the sample an amount of polypeptide that binds to the binding agent; and
- (c) comparing the amount of polypeptide to a predetermined cut-off value, and therefrom determining the presence or absence of a cancer in the patient.

43. A method according to claim 42, wherein the binding agent is an antibody.

44. A method according to claim 43, wherein the antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

45. A method according to claim 42, wherein the cancer is prostate cancer.

46. A method for monitoring the progression of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of:

- (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient at a first point in time with a binding agent that binds to a prostate-specific protein, wherein the protein comprises

an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence of any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536, or a complement of any of the foregoing polynucleotides;

(b) detecting in the sample an amount of polypeptide that binds to the binding agent;

(c) repeating steps (a) and (b) using a biological sample obtained from the patient at a subsequent point in time; and

(d) comparing the amount of polypeptide detected in step (c) to the amount detected in step (b) and therefrom monitoring the progression of the cancer in the patient.

47. A method according to claim 46, wherein the binding agent is an antibody.

48. A method according to claim 47, wherein the antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

49. A method according to claim 46, wherein the cancer is a prostate cancer.

50. A method for determining the presence or absence of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of:

(a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with an oligonucleotide that hybridizes to a polynucleotide that encodes a prostate-specific protein, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence of any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536, or a complement of any of the foregoing polynucleotides;

(b) detecting in the sample an amount of a polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide; and

(c) comparing the amount of polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide to a predetermined cut-off value, and therefrom determining the presence or absence of a cancer in the patient.

51. A method according to claim 50, wherein the amount of polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide is determined using a polymerase chain reaction.

52. A method according to claim 50, wherein the amount of polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide is determined using a hybridization assay.

53. A method for monitoring the progression of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of:

(a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with an oligonucleotide that hybridizes to a polynucleotide that encodes a prostate-specific protein, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence of any one of SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382 and 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536, or a complement of any of the foregoing polynucleotides;

(b) detecting in the sample an amount of a polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide;

(c) repeating steps (a) and (b) using a biological sample obtained from the patient at a subsequent point in time; and

(d) comparing the amount of polynucleotide detected in step (c) to the amount detected in step (b) and therefrom monitoring the progression of the cancer in the patient.

54. A method according to claim 53, wherein the amount of polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide is determined using a polymerase chain reaction.

55. A method according to claim 53, wherein the amount of polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide is determined using a hybridization assay.

56. A diagnostic kit, comprising:

- (a) one or more antibodies according to claim 11; and
- (b) a detection reagent comprising a reporter group.

57. A kit according to claim 56, wherein the antibodies are immobilized on a solid support.

58. A kit according to claim 56, wherein the detection reagent comprises an anti-immunoglobulin, protein G, protein A or lectin.

59. A kit according to claim 56, wherein the reporter group is selected from the group consisting of radioisotopes, fluorescent groups, luminescent groups, enzymes, biotin and dye particles.

60. An oligonucleotide comprising 10 to 40 contiguous nucleotides that hybridize under moderately stringent conditions to a polynucleotide that encodes a prostate-specific protein, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-45, 47-52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536, or a complement of any of the foregoing polynucleotides.

61. A oligonucleotide according to claim 60, wherein the oligonucleotide comprises 10-40 contiguous nucleotides recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 8-29, 41-45, 47-

52, 54-65, 70, 73-74, 79, 81, 87, 90, 92, 93, 97, 103, 104, 107, 109-111, 115-160, 171, 173-175, 177, 181, 188, 191, 193, 194, 198, 203, 204, 207, 209, 220, 222-225, 227-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 350-365, 381, 382, 384, 386, 389, 390, 392, 393, 396, 401, 402, 407, 408, 410, 413, 415-419, 422, 426, 427, 432, 434, 435, 442-444, 446, 450, 452, 453, 459-461, 468-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536.

62. A diagnostic kit, comprising:

(a) an oligonucleotide according to claim 61; and

(b) a diagnostic reagent for use in a polymerase chain reaction or hybridization

assay.

63. A host cell according to claim 10, wherein the cell is selected from the group consisting of: *E. coli*, baculovirus and mammalian cells.

64. A recombinant protein produced by a host cell according to claim 10.